GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3615
ANSWERED ON:07.04.2003
FLOOD CONTROL IN HIMACHAL PRADESH
SURESH CHANDEL

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted study to ascertain the causes of the devastating floods which hit the Kinnaur, the border district of Himachal Pradesh three Years ago;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government have taken any steps to check the recurrence of such incidents; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI)

(a) & (b) The river Sutlej originates from Rakas/Mansarovarlakes from Tibet region in China. It traverses a long distance in Tibet before entering into India with large catchment areas lying in Tibet region. Attempts made to ascertain the cause of unprecedented flash flood which occurred in the river Sutlej in August 2000 indicated that there were no corresponding wide spread rains in the upper catchment in the Indian side. It was therefore conjectured that the flash flood could be due to some cloud burst in the upper catchment or a lake burst due to some avalanche in the Tibet region.

The National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) Hyderabad in its studies suggested that there could be high possibility of cloud burst in Tibet region causing heavy rainfall. Also water accumulation due to some isolated blockades adding to the heavy rainfall is also one possibility of heavy floods.

An inter−ministerial team which visited the flash flood sites from 7th August to 9th August observed that the flash flood, more likely, could have been caused by failure of water impounding system in Tibet resulting in a way of water racing down the course of river.

(c)&(d) The Government of India entered into a dialogue withthe Government of China to explore the possibility of transfer of hydrological information for the rivers originating in China so that advance warning is issued and such catastrophic incidents could be avoided. As a consequence to this, a Memorandum of Understanding for sharing of hydrological information for river Brahmaputra has been signed with the Government of China but regarding sharing of data for river Sutlej, presently no such agreement has been arrived at.